

REMARKS

Claims 1-4, 10-14 and 18-24 remain pending in the application. Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks contained herein.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 15-17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Shimoda et al., Japanese Patent Abstract Publication Number 10-125931. This rejection is respectfully traversed. Notwithstanding and solely in the interest of expediting prosecution, Applicant cancels claims 15-17. Accordingly, this rejection is moot.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

Applicant acknowledges with thanks the allowance of claims 1-4, 10-14 and 18-24.

COMMENTS ON STATEMENT OF REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

Reasons for allowance are only warranted in instances in which "the record of the prosecution as a whole does not make clear [the Examiner's] reasons for allowing a claim or claims." 37 C.F.R. 1.104 (e). In the present case, Applicant believes the record as a whole makes clear the reasons for allowance and therefore no statement by the Examiner is necessary or warranted, especially since the statement may unfairly focus on certain reasons for allowance which are not reflected by the prosecution history. Therefore, the record should reflect that Applicant does not necessarily agree with each

statement in the reasons for allowance. For example, while Applicant believes the claims are allowable, Applicant may not unequivocally agree that patentability resides solely in the specific feature or combination of features identified, or that each feature or combination of features identified is required for patentability, or that equivalents of any of the recited features are outside the scope of the claims. Moreover, to the extent the reasons for allowance do not separately address the subject matter of all the claims, Applicant does not acquiesce to any inference that the non-addressed claims fail to present other reasons for patentability apart from the patentability of the claims which were specifically addressed by the Examiner.

CONCLUSION

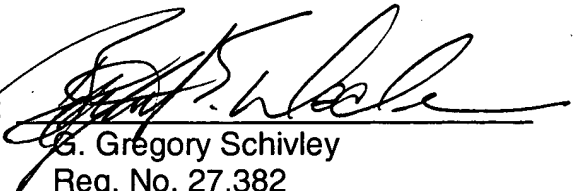
It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (248) 641-1600.

Respectfully submitted,

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